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# Some Comparisons in Fundamental Education for Rural and Urban Areas in a Non-Industrialized Country

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SOME COMPARISONS IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION  
FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN A  
NON-INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY

By

Nguyen-thi-Quyt

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree of  
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIFE

Nguyen thi Quyt was born in Hue, Vietnam on September, 1930.

In 1950, she got her Bachelor of Sciences from the Lycée Khai Dinh, Huế, and started her first year of Pharmacy at the Faculté Mixte de Pharmacie et de Médecine in Saigon, Vietnam before coming to America in 1951.

She was graduated from Marian College, Indianapolis, Indiana in 1953 with the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Education, and began her graduate work at Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois in September 1953.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction . . . . .	Page v-x
Chapter	
I. AIMS AND SCOPE OF FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION . . . . .	1
II. CONDITIONS OF RURAL AND URBAN AREAS IN NON-INDUSTRI- ALIZED COUNTRY . . . . .	14
III. FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION CONTENT FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS . . . . .	32
IV. METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS . . . . .	54
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION . . . . .	74
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	81-87

# LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. ECONOMIC FACTORS IN UNDERDEVELOPED, INTERMEDIATE AND DEVELOPED COUNTRY . . . . .	15
II. HEALTH CONDITIONS IN UNDERDEVELOPED, INTERMEDIATE AND DEVELOPED COUNTRY . . . . .	16
III. REDUCTION OF ILLITERACY IN THE URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION OF EIGHT SELECTED COUNTRIES FOR VARIOUS PERIODS, SINCE 1900 . . . . .	35
IV. REDUCTION OF ILLITERACY AMONG THE <u>MALE AND FEMALE</u> POPULATION IN TWENTY-FIVE SELECTED COUNTRIES FOR VARIOUS PERIODS, SINCE ABOUT 1900 . . . . .	37

## INTRODUCTION

Fundamental education is a rather newly organized but important field in education, particularly among the peoples of less developed areas of the world. If one follows closely the recent educational trends in the world, one cannot help but notice the strong emphasis on the so-called "Fundamental Education" in various countries.

The fundamental education programs now in existence in many different countries tend to have objectives which have grown out of local and specific needs. Here Fundamental education appears under the campaign for literacy; there it may present itself under the program of improving the agricultural methods and techniques; in another place, a fundamental education project is carried out as a campaign for better health, better nutrition and the like.

On the larger scale, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been launching several projects in fundamental education with the cooperation of other related agencies, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), and others which have similar interests in social betterment and in community development. Hand in hand with its member states, UNESCO has been initiating various

pilot projects in Haiti, China, British East Africa to experiment in the latest educational techniques in raising the standards of living in a community. Besides, UNESCO is also planning for a twelve-year program to train specialists in fundamental education. Training centers are to be in Latin America, Equatorial Africa, the Middle East, India, and the Far East. A typical center will be organized to perform a four-fold task: research, production of educational materials, teacher training, and aid to fundamental education activities in its region.<sup>1</sup> Such centers are now in operation in Egypt (near Cairo), at Patzcuaro, Mexico, and in Mysore, India. In addition to this, UNESCO has carried on a large amount of publication of various information and materials in order to serve as a clearing house to its member states.

Since fundamental education has gradually but steadily become of great importance within the past ten years, particularly to countries that need great deal of reconstruction and development, a study of its objectives and methods is important today. It is of interest not only to international and national agencies, but also to students and teachers everywhere. Recently, there have been several theses written along this line of education. The work of Miss Mildred Tsai at the Smith College, for instance, was an attempt to study the fundamental education program of UNESCO in her "Fundamental Education: The Backbone of Unesco", an

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, Learn and Live (Paris, 1951), p. 9.

unpublished Master's thesis. Another recent study at the Tennessee State College is the thesis of Mrs. Betty McKay who wrote on "The Fundamental Education Project at Patzcuaro, Michoacan, Mexico" in 1953.

However, no one has yet studied the characteristics of fundamental education program for rural and urban areas as such. In spite of the fact that fundamental education is needed in urban areas, efforts in fundamental education have been mostly directed toward rural regions where the needs seem to be the most urgent. And it is the purpose of this thesis to deal with that problem of exploring the characteristics of fundamental education programs for rural and urban areas, in a non-industrialized country.

The term "rural" and "urban" denote somewhat different conditions of life from country to country, and from province to province. Rural and urban areas of an industrialized country will inevitably be extremely different from those of a less-developed one. And even among the so-called non-industrialized countries, the conditions and needs are also different, due to various other factors such as social, educational, religious, economic or political. However, in spite of their local colors, in an industrialized or non-industrialized country, as a whole, the rural or urban areas do have certain basic and common characteristics of their own that one might use as basis for comparison.

Thus, the words "non-industrialized country" as used in this thesis, connotes many areas, many regions. The conditions



described might be that of Mexico, South America, the Far East or Near East, or other places. But on the other hand, it is not any one of them in particular. "Non-industrialized" is used here to refer to those countries where industries, even small, are few, and agriculture is the predominant occupation of the people.

The term "non-industrialized" and "underdeveloped" might be used interchangeably. Even though they connote different aspects of the problem, the degree of industrialization and the level of development of a country are highly correlated to each other. Industries help to produce goods in better quantity and quality, to use natural resources to their maximum, to help in saving time and energy, and thus give the people more leisure and opportunities to develop themselves along lines other than working themselves out to secure a living. In the world today, a world characterized by its rapid and drastic industrialization, the degree of development of a country is tightly knit with that of industrialization. And those two terms can be thus used simultaneously.

They are used in preference to the old epithets "backward" and "primitive", because the latter sound a little too contemptuous and are quite often used in a derogatory manner. The underdeveloped countries may be called "backward" or "primitive" perhaps only in the technical sense of the term. Their people might be poor, underfed, underclothed, underhoused; they might lack the material comforts of the more technically advanced countries. But who can say whether they are primitive or backward in the

The literature in fundamental education is all contemporary and thus available; it will be possible to study practically all that have been written on the subject. One of the richest source of information and materials in this field is UNESCO, since fundamental education is one of its major activities and may be perhaps duly regarded as its backbone.<sup>2</sup> Because it is a new field its literature is limited. This thesis is, therefore, somewhat exploratory and speculative, though the problem of the thesis is a practical one. It is suggested that a similar study might be interesting to carry on ten or fifteen years from now when the now new fundamental education projects will have a history to study and consider.

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<sup>2</sup>Mildred Tsai, Fundamental Education: The Backbone of Unesco, Unpublished Master's Thesis (Smith College, Northampton, 1953).

## CHAPTER I

### AIMS AND SCOPE OF FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION

People are the foundation of nations and thereby of the whole world. If the foundation is firm, the world will enjoy tranquility; but three-fourths of the world's population are underfed, under-clothed, under-housed, and illiterate.<sup>1</sup> These hungry millions provide nourishing foods for the growth of Communism, because liberty and freedom are only empty words to those who live with empty stomachs and endless series of sufferings. Colonial philosophy and economic policy are responsible in no small measure for this state of affairs. The present situation needs to be remedied if one hopes to bring peace, love, and prosperity to the world. Almost every nation, and particularly those nations which cooperate in UNESCO, have felt this need and have been trying hard to solve these common problems of poverty, ignorance and health.

Ignorance is not an isolated social fact; it is part of the tragic circle of underproduction, malnutrition, disease and high death rate. This circle cannot be broken if only one of these elements is attacked. It is useless to concentrate on improving

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<sup>1</sup>James Yen, as quoted in Tell the People by Pearl Buck (New York, 1945), p. 11.

health if the entire population remains undernourished. It is equally useless to teach the people how to read and write if they do not have any incentive to use their acquired knowledge. Agricultural production cannot be raised if disease and ignorance keep the people in a condition of physical and mental inertia.<sup>2</sup> These problems are very complex and demand a broader approach than the traditional school-room methods which aim primarily at imparting academic knowledge to the children. Unfortunately, the latter is just the common case of many underdeveloped countries. Kendrick Marshall remarked that "In most underdeveloped countries, the schools have been traditionally concerned with the education of a privileged elite by means of a classical curriculum having little or no relationship to the problems of every day living, and inculcating little or no sense of social responsibility. Meanwhile the children of the masses seldom have the opportunities to go to school at all."<sup>3</sup>

Previously, many efforts have been carried out in underdeveloped areas under such name as "mass education", "basic education", "cultural missions" or "community development". The term "Fundamental education" was coined by UNESCO, a world organization designed to achieve peace by promoting collaboration among the

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<sup>2</sup>Unesco, Learn and Live (Paris, 1951), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Kendrick Marshall, "The Fundamental Education Program of Unesco," Educational Digest, XVI (January, 1951), 7.

coordinator and stimulator of various fundamental education programs in its member states. It gives them technical assistance, when needed, through various educational missions. It serves on the other hand as an international clearing house for the exchange and wide diffusion of information on the latest techniques and materials being used throughout the world.<sup>6</sup>

Fundamental education is simply education in the fundamentals of life. Usually, because of the urgent need of literacy in the present day world, fundamental education in many countries focuses its efforts on attacking of illiteracy. But literacy alone is not enough. It is not an end in itself; it is rather an important means toward a broader end, that of raising the living standards of the people in underdeveloped areas.

When talking about raising the standards of living, one will undoubtedly wonder about what are the standards to be aimed at. Are there any such common yardsticks for the whole world? That is a good debatable question. People have divergent opinions on it. However, nobody would doubt that it is necessary that all human beings should have a minimum of food, a minimum in quantity and quality in order to live a healthy life. That is the fact, even though it does not mean that all men and women should have the same foodstuffs, in the same quantity and prepared in the same way. All the factors such as age, sex, type of work, climate,

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<sup>6</sup>Unesco, The World Programme of Unesco (Unesco, n.d.), p. 8.

habits, and so on, must be taken into consideration.<sup>7</sup> What is true for foods is also true for clothing, for housing and the like. Millions of peoples in the world today do not even have enough food, enough clothes, enough of other elements to live a decent life as a human being. These people constitute not only the large masses of many underdeveloped areas, but also a number of underprivileged groups right in the heart of most advanced areas as well. The mine workers, the migratory laborers, fishermen, refugees, and other submerged poor in the city slums deserve as much attention from fundamental education program as the people in the backward areas. In other words, wherever there is ignorance and disease, illiteracy and poverty, constituting a hindrance to human progress and a barrier to international understanding and world prosperity, there is the need for fundamental education.

The main purpose of fundamental education is "to help the people understand their immediate problems and to give them the skills to solve them through their own efforts... It is to salvage a generation by giving it the minimum of education needed to improve its way of life, its health, its productivity, and its social, economic and political organization."<sup>8</sup> The objective of fundamental education is not to implant a foreign culture on top of a native soil; it is not the question of Westernizing, so to

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<sup>7</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Common Ground for All Peoples (New York, 1947), pp. 202-203.

<sup>8</sup>Unesco, Learn and Live, p. 7.

speaking, blindly every corner of the earth. How monotonous it will be if every country in the world possesses the same thing. The diversity of cultures might be compared to the music of a symphony to whose complexity each instrument contributes its notes. Mr. Caliver is very right in maintaining that fundamental education should try to develop the best elements in the people's culture. In the "Project of Adult Education for Negroes," he said that, "Fundamental Education is designed to help underprivileged people to live fuller and happier lives in an ever changing environment, to develop the best elements in their own culture, and to participate in the economic and social progress in their areas and in the world. It attempts to give people the fundamental tools which will enable them to function effectively at least on the elementary level, as workers, citizens, and individuals."<sup>9</sup>

As workers, men and women should be given an amount of fundamental education that will permit them to dominate their physical environment and to preserve and exploit the natural resources in order to raise their standards of living. As citizens, they should be educated so that they will live in harmony with their environment, their family, community, nation as well as other parts of the world. As individuals, they should be provided a minimum of education which will enable them to develop the best

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<sup>9</sup>A. Caliver, "Project for Adult Education for Negroes," School Life, XXXI (November 1948), 4.

of themselves, to live healthy and fit, acquiring a strong sense of human dignity through spiritual, mental and moral progress.

To fulfill these vast objectives in combatting disease, poverty, and ignorance, fundamental education should include instruction in methods of hygiene, child care, in new techniques of agriculture, husbandry, in the elements of economic, social organizations and the like. Such a wide scope of activities unavoidably results in some overlapping with that of adult education. It is not easy to draw a definite line between them. However, one can say, in general, that the scope of fundamental education is broader, and at the same time, narrower than that of adult education. It is broader because it includes not only the adults but also the children. It is narrower because it limits itself only to the minimum and basic education indispensable for men to live a fuller and happier life.

To reach the masses, that so-called minimum education can not be much, and one might question the effectiveness of such little knowledge. Is a little knowledge dangerous as Pope once said? Or is much knowledge more dangerous than little knowledge for the same reason that a bomber is more dangerous than a bow or arrow? The real issue is not whether knowledge should be little or great; the question is whether the heart is set on the right path, for all knowledge is dangerous if the heart is savage. Montaigne also maintained the same opinion when he said that "La



science sans conscience n'est que ruine de l'âme." Science without conscience is the destruction of the soul. Fundamental education, like any other education, should be aware of that fact, and try its best to keep the training of the heart abreast that of the mind.

Because of its vast scope, fundamental education also seems to delve into the realm of vocational education, to a certain extent. The training of people in simple methods of agriculture, husbandry, in the exploitation of natural resources, and the like, often constitute, in fact, a beginning step necessary for further professional training.<sup>10</sup> It plays great emphasis on the development of small but useful industries and does not deal with the broad scope of vocational education.

The content of fundamental education is unlimited, and probably no two experts would agree on any definite program as such, because it will have to depend on the local conditions of each place. Even though fundamental education concerns itself with the whole range of basic human activity, it concentrates first on the most urgent needs and problems of each particular area under consideration. In a community predominantly agricultural, but where the level of living is very low, and the methods of cultivation very backward, the fundamental education program

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<sup>10</sup>"Education de Base," Service Social Dans le Monde, No. 2, (Published in Brussels) (May 1952), 62.

will inevitably capitalize on the agricultural improvement. Techniques in preventing soil erosion, adoption of selection of seeds, rotation of crops, and the like, will be included in the program. On the other hand, if the group is illiterate and needs to read directions and important notices in the factory, for example, literacy campaign is obviously the first thing to be initiated.

Whatever the content might include, fundamental education program should develop in the long run the skills of thinking and communicating, skills in domestic science as well as in vocational occupation, and in self-expression in the arts and crafts. The education for health through personal and community hygiene should not be neglected. Besides, the program should be originated so that to better the knowledge and understanding of the physical as well as human environment; it should succeed in helping people understand the natural processes and know other parts of the world and the people who live in them. On the other hand, fundamental education should not overlook the "development of qualities to fit men to live in the modern world such as personal judgment and initiative, freedom from fear and superstition, sympathy and understanding for different points of view." And above all, in its intensive, long run plan, fundamental education should not disregard the spiritual and moral development of the people.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description and Programme (Paris, 1949), p. 11.

At first glance, fundamental education now in practice in various parts of the world seems to focus its primary effort on enriching the physical side of life. Almost in every corner of the earth today, the trend appears to be that of promoting better health, better crops, more adequate supply of food, shelter, and so on. It seems to be so because of the urgent need along that line. However, one should not ignore the fact that fundamental education is not a mere communication of scientific knowledge and techniques, even though it is undeniable that science had brought good things to man and must not be undervalued. If education is reduced to the mere transmission of science, it would cause great damage, because of the deadening effect of the machine age on the soul of man.

The prestige of science in the contemporary world seems to be largely due to the service it renders to militarists and industrialists. Most of its triumphs are on the material realm. But spiritually, Mr. Ras Vihary Das believed that, with the development of science, man has not been made better than his forefathers. "Peace and tranquility, charity and justice as well as other virtues of mind and spirit, have not been quite as abundant in the scientific age as one would wish them to be."<sup>12</sup> A little further in the international round-table discussion

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<sup>12</sup>Unesco, Humanism and Education in East and West (Paris, 1953), p. 78.

about Humanism and Education in East and West, he said,

It (science) assumes that everything is knowable and is in principle sensible, that our intellect is sufficient to cope with all aspects of reality. I conceive it to be a moral duty of all intelligent persons to carry forward the work of intellectual analysis and understanding as far as it will go; and we cannot recognize any arbitrary limit beforehand. But this is different from supposing as science seems to do, that there cannot exist any mysteries in reality which we may be unable to solve. This is likely to breed intellectual arrogance and lack of genuine humility.<sup>13</sup>

The wheel of scientific progress and development cannot be turned back; the only thing left for modern world to do is to put it in its due place. Science and technology are only means, and as such, they are neither good nor bad. In teaching scientific knowledge and technology to the people, fundamental education should see to it that they will use them as useful means to live happier and fuller, and not to cling to their material advantages and make them idols of their life. Until this is achieved, the possible spiritual danger to men due to science cannot be discarded.

Another problem not less important to be considered is that of the modern doctrine of adjustment. Education should help the students adjust themselves to the environment in which they live. It is true, in deed, but not complete. In his "Change Our Environment," Hutchins maintained, "Our mission here on earth is to change our environment, not to adjust ourselves to it. To adjust

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

ourselves to brutality, inhumanity, injustice, and stupidity, of which the world is full--though it is easy, and may look profitable--is habit forming and will make out of you at the least a character you would now shudder to think of."<sup>14</sup> He believed that the problem lies in the moral and intellectual realm, in achieving the feeling that one has done the most of oneself, the best one could, and not let oneself, neither one's fellowmen down.<sup>15</sup> This attitude depicts the other extreme of the issue. It is right to a certain extent, but cannot be altogether true, just like its opponent. Life is not a constant one-way adjustment, either the individual to his environment, or vice versa. It is not that simple. It is rather a combination of the two. Fundamental education, as well as all other educational programs, should be aware of that fact so that in its efforts to educate men it does not give undue emphasis to either factors.

This briefly is the general picture of fundamental education, a new field in today's education, particularly in underdeveloped countries. Looking around the world, one cannot deny its importance. It is a big job and a great challenge to national as well as international agencies. It is not a life's time work. It will take generations and generations to accomplish maybe a small

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<sup>14</sup>R. M. Hutchins, "Change Our Environment," The Phi Delta Kappan, XXXIII (October 1951), 86.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

portion of it. In the following chapters, efforts are given to determine, to some extent, the characteristics of such an important educational program for rural and urban areas of a non-industrialized country.

#### THE NON-INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY

The industrial development of the last two or three decades has opened the way to the use of the world's resources with far greater effectiveness. But the rate of progress is slow in the non-industrialized areas. While some countries succeed in achieving economic development, as attested by better living standards and working conditions of their people, many others are still struggling in applying modern techniques.

In these regions, living standards are low, and the economy is largely or entirely agricultural. The majority of the population is illiterate, not because of a lack of intelligence, but because of a lack of access to education. The majority of the population is illiterate, not because of a lack of intelligence, but because of a lack of access to education. The majority of the population is illiterate, not because of a lack of intelligence, but because of a lack of access to education.

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## CHAPTER II

### CONDITIONS OF RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

#### IN NON-INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRY

Rapid industrial development of the last two or three centuries has opened the way to the use of the world's resources with increasing effectiveness. But the rate of progress is very uneven for various areas. While some countries succeed in bringing great industrial development, and thereby better to a great extent the living and working conditions of their people, many others are still very slow in applying modern techniques.

In backward regions, human and natural resources are not used properly or effectively. The economy of these underdeveloped areas is typically agrarian. The majority of them make their living from the soil. But because of primitive and backward methods and tools used in cultivating the land, the output per person is only one-tenth of that achieved in the more advanced countries.<sup>1</sup> Livestock and poultry are often poorly bred, poorly kept and unproductive.

Being already poor, the peasants in most underdeveloped areas

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, Technical Assistance for Economic Development. A Report (Lake Success, New York, 1949), p. 4.

suffer, one way or another, the yoke of the land tenant system. They work hard, but succeed in securing only a bare subsistence. A large part of their labor's profits goes to the landlord's pocket because of high rate of land rent, and excessive interest in lending money.

Industries, if there are any, are scarce and small in scale. They are mostly cottage industries, very traditional in their methods, and inadequate in their productivity. Working conditions leave much to be desired. Individual income is very low, and thus living conditions are inadequate. According to the following table, the economic level of the people in underdeveloped country is very undesirable, if compared to that of the more developed ones. The non-human energy consumed in underdeveloped country, for instance, is less than one-twentieth of that used in the developed region.

TABLE I<sup>2</sup>

ECONOMIC FACTORS IN UNDERDEVELOPED, INTERMEDIATE  
AND DEVELOPED COUNTRY.

	Underdeveloped 2/3 of the world	Intermediate 1/6 of the world	Developed 1/6 of the world
Per capita Income <sup>a</sup>	41	154	461
Non-Human Energy <sup>b</sup> Consumed	1.2	6.4	26.6
Industrial Investment <sup>c</sup>	11	39	100

<sup>2</sup>From U.S. Department of State, Point Four, Cooperative Program for Aid in the Development of Economically Underdeveloped Areas, Publication 3719 (January, 1950), Chart "C", p. 16.



<sup>a</sup>U.S. Dollars equivalent per anum.

<sup>b</sup>Horsepower hours per day, per capita.

<sup>c</sup>Per worker (Index 100).

Illiteracy is very common. Opportunities for training in skilled trade, in agricultural techniques are very meager. There is little or no frame work of public health administration; the elementary rules of health are either not known or practiced. As a result, malnutrition and starvation, disease and a high death rate are very common. The average life expectancy in most of those underdeveloped countries is about less than half as long as in the highly developed countries. As a matter of fact, there is a large number of areas in the world which have a life expectancy as low as thirty-three years or even thirty years. The coming table summarizes briefly but clearly the health conditions of underdeveloped in comparison to those of more developed countries.

TABLE II<sup>3</sup>

HEALTH CONDITIONS IN UNDERDEVELOPED, INTERMEDIATE  
AND DEVELOPED COUNTRY

	Underdeveloped 2/3 of the world	Intermediate 1/6 of the world	Developed 1/6 of the world
Physicians (per 100,000)	17	78	106
Life Expectancy (years)	30	52	63
T.B. Death Rate (per 100,000)	333	143	64

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., from Chart "F", p. 25.

With such a lack of progress, what are the conditions of its rural and urban areas? The terms "rural" and "urban" are not easy to define. The United States census classifies urban as an area with 25,000 or more population. But actually, the basis for any rural-urban definition is not in number of people; Kreitlow believed that it is rather in the "relationships between people and between people and the land."<sup>4</sup>

In a predominantly agricultural country, the majority of the population live in rural communities. In some places, they live in villages, in others, on scattered farms. Whatever the set-up may be, the rural area, particularly of a non-industrialized country, is characterized by a lack of water supply, electricity, adequate means of transportation and communication, and of many other comforts of city life.

Communication and transportation facilities are generally limited and primitive. Traveling is mainly by foot, horses, or slow boat. Postal service, if there is any, is slow and inadequate; sometimes, even such inadequate service is non-existent in many places. Transaction of business and transmission of ideas are largely oral, informal, face to face relationships.<sup>5</sup> Electricity hardly exists in rural areas, and water supply is perhaps one of the biggest problems. Water is the source of life of the

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<sup>4</sup>Burton Kreitlow, Rural Education: Community Backgrounds (New York, 1954), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Hsin Pao Yang, Adult Education in Rural Community (Unesco, Paris, 1950), p. 3.

people; but in most of the rural communities of underdeveloped countries, water is scarce, and sometimes very far from the living quarters. And even when available, it is very often contaminated.

Soil erosion is another factor contributing to the extreme poverty of many of the rural people. Forests are cut down without much attention to the detrimental effect on the soil. Left to the mercy of strong rain and wind, the soil is washed away, its fertility is lost, and undesirable crops result. A great deal of natural resources are wasted through soil erosion, and through the lack of knowledge about scientific techniques and modern tools which would increase the potential output of labor. In most non-industrialized countries, besides the loss in production as such, the conditions are aggravated because of the inadequate ways of conserving farm products. A great percentage of stored grains and edible legumes are lost. It is claimed that about 10 percent of the total world crop is useless, due to the effects of insects, rodents, and fungi.<sup>6</sup> Taking these factors into consideration, it is not difficult to see why the output per person is very small in comparison to the work put in. As consequence, the individual income and consequent level of living of the people are low.

Housing in underdeveloped countries is generally inadequate in their rural areas. Most of the houses or huts serve at the

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<sup>6</sup>Unesco, Technical Assistance, pp. 22-23.

same time as kitchen, sleeping quarters, as well as a workshop. In Mexico, for example, people sleep on straw mats right on the dirt floor.<sup>7</sup> The shelter differs from country to country. It is built of bamboo, thatch, wood, mud, stone, or brick. It follows traditional pattern and in general the "washing facilities are unsatisfactory; there is no provision for sewage and garbage disposal; the water supply is inconvenient or contaminated; insects infest the huts, and animals share the shelter with the people."<sup>8</sup> That is an encouraging condition for contagious diseases.

On the other hand, because of poverty, the question of clothing and proper diet has no place in the farmer's primary concerns. They consider themselves to be lucky if they can secure just enough foods to put away hunger, and enough of something to calm down the vicissitudes of the weather. The low level of living reduces the vitality of the people; and with the common unsanitary conditions of most rural communities, diseases are very familiar. Diarrhea, malaria, tuberculosis, and many other contagious diseases have a strong hold of the people. Health and welfare services are in general lacked; midwives and nurses are scarce, and doctors, not in existence in most of the rural areas. Besides, the belief in evil spirit, in witchcraft, and black magic as causes of diseases of many rural folk deprives the sick from adequate medical

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<sup>8</sup>Unesco, Youth and Fundamental Education (Paris, 1954), p. 18.

<sup>7</sup>Nathan L. Whetten, Rural Mexico (Chicago, 1948), p. 447.

care. All these factors create a high incidence of mortal diseases, high death rate, and particularly of high infant mortality. Almost all these deaths are to be charged up to the ignorance of the people and their extreme poverty.

Ignorance begets poverty, and poverty begets ignorance. That is really a vicious circle for many people. But that is not yet all for rural community. Discuss about the conditions of rural Cuba, Lowry Nelson observed that "The major problems that weigh heavily on rural Cuba are poverty, ignorance, isolation, and lack of local initiative and responsibility."<sup>9</sup> What is true for Cuba is also true to a great extent to many other underdeveloped countries. Isolation is perhaps the universal index to rural life particularly in those areas where means of communication and transportation are very meager and inadequate. More or less self-supported in food, clothing, shelter, even in a undesirable way, rural community is relatively cut off from the rest of the society.

On the other hand, the lack of local initiative and responsibility is, to a great extent, unescapable when the people are poor, ignorant, and isolated. Being isolated, they do not know about the better life of other people outside their community. They are thus inclined to feel satisfied with their lot and are not eager to find new ways, new things to better themselves. Furthermore, because they are ignorant, they do not see their

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<sup>9</sup>Lowry Nelson, Rural Cuba (Minneapolis, 1950), p. 256.

responsibility toward society, and do not have the needed knowledge for leadership. Besides, rural people are in general so pressed by their immediate problems of daily living that their range of interests in life is narrowed, and their personal initiative, cramped. And even when there are some individuals capable of initiative and responsibility in the community, they usually tend to move away to the city where life is much more comfortable. As consequence, rural area has constantly suffered from this lack of leadership.

Among those major problems of rural community, isolation is the most predominant factor. The physical isolation of rural life gives rise to its mental isolation. Its people tend to cling to localism or provincialism. Their ideas, concepts, conventions, attitudes, and even procedures in their daily living are usually dictated by traditions and customs. The individual's behavior is greatly controlled and regulated by society. In rural community, everyone knows everybody else. As result, there emerges an unknown but strong force of social censure which restrains people from wrong doing. This moral help is more or less lacked in most of the advanced urban areas.

Strongly attached to traditions and customs, the rural people form a relatively homogeneous and stable group. It is in part due to its kinship relations, and on the other hand, to its relative lack of mobility within and among its socio-economic classes. Disregarding the existence of the caste system, peculiar

to some place--India for example, in most underdeveloped regions, it is a long and hard process for rural people to improve their social status. All their hard work, long endurance can hardly solve the basic necessities of life for many of them. How then can they save money, time, or energy to better their social status? Thus, in rural society, life seems to be stagnant and slow in its evolution toward progress.

Besides its homogeneity and stability, and due in large part to its isolation, the rural community has a strong sense of unity among its members. There is great deal of personal and informal contact among neighbors, even though the areas of contact are of less variety than in urban society. And as though to compensate to the narrowness in the horizon of contacts, rural people have some kind of warmth in their heart, "a native warmth of heart, not cooled by convention and competition."<sup>10</sup> The sense of solidarity, of brotherhood, of mutual love and help is strong.

Unity is one of the characteristics of rural community, especially in regard to its individual family. Carl Taylor said in his Rural Sociology that the country home is a social entity far more than it is in the city, where there are hundreds of other agencies competing for the time and attention of its members.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Anderson, The Country Town (New York, 1914), p.207.

<sup>11</sup>Carl Taylor, Rural Sociology (New York, London, 1926), p. 188.

Contact with outsiders of the community is much lesser than in urban areas. The home is the main focus of interests of the people. That is the place where they spend most of their time together: they live together, eat together, and work together as a good team. Everyone in the family contributes in his, or her way to the common welfare of the family.

The husband, being the head of the unit, does work hard to support the whole household. In many underdeveloped countries, particularly those in Asia, this includes not only the parents and children, but grand-parents, uncle, aunt, nieces, nephews as well. Work in rural area is labor from startlight to startlight. A great deal of hard manual labor is required because of the exceedingly primitive implements and methods. It is time-consuming, energy-consuming, and thereby, money-consuming process. Thus the rural folk in less developed areas have in general little or no time for play or rest. Life is rather quite and monotonous, not full of excitement like that in urban region.

The condition of women is perhaps the worse among the lot. Besides their domestic duties and care for the children, they also share the hard work of the farm with their men sometimes. It is not easy work, that of women in the country side; and it is much more so in non-industrialized countries where modern methods, time-saving, and energy-saving devices are lacked, or even not in existence. From dawn to dawn and all year round, the woman is always with work. Having no time to herself, her little world is



very narrow, may be limited only to the barn lot. Too much work, and having usually no education except that given through traditions and customs, she seldom has enough time and necessary knowledge to care properly for her children.

The latter, more or less brought up by nature during their tender years, become gradually helpful members of the family. At five or six, they already start to give a little help around the house. From baby-sitting job to the work about the house, or at the market place with her mother, the girl gets her "education" slowly but in a practical way. The boy, on his part, assists his father in caring for the cattle and gradually takes up the work in the farm. In that way, the methods and techniques, as well as the traditional outlook on life are transmitted little by little, but firmly to the younger generation.

In a physical and social set-up of rural community as just examined, how then is the place of education in rural life? Children in rural areas are, in general, very latent in attending school. And this is even more aggravated in underdeveloped countries where educational facilities are scarce and compulsory education laws are not enacted, or even not in existence. "Education is regarded as a privilege only for leisure class, a selected few having special mental endowment for intellectual pursuits."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Hsin Pao Yang, Adult Education in Rural Community, p. 3.

That is the common attitude. Besides, the kind of education usually given in most underdeveloped countries, is very academic, having little or nothing to do with the practical side of life. It appears to the common people to be unuseful, and is, on the other hand, too expensive to send the children to school. Many of them do not have enough money, to secure decent clothes, minimum foods and needed books for their children to go and get educated. More than that, children are usually needed in and about the house; sending them to school is in the way a great loss to the family.

Moreover, because of the strong attachement of the people to localism, traditions and old customs, they do not feel inclined to learn new thing. In many rural communities, customs and traditions are quite often emerged with superstitions, and are likely subjected to criticism or renovation by educated people. The ignorant and very conservative peasants thus do not have much sympathy for the latter and therefore for "education". On their part, the landlords, the ruling class do not favor education either for fear of losing their positions and benefits once the people become educated. To them, "getting educated seems likely to mislead the people, and make them become 'new stylist', no longer paying respect to tradition and customs, and as a result more difficult to manage and govern."<sup>13</sup> Formal education in rural

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

area is thus very low. School, if there is any, is usually frequented by children of a handful families of means. And even when there is a high incentive to go to school, in Vietnam for instance where education was once regarded as a basis for social classification, the children of the common people are unable to fulfill their aspirations for lack of needed educational facilities.

To sum up, rural conditions are potentially healthful with its wholesome family life, social community life, and its close harmony with nature. But on the other hand, there is much to be improved and changed to overcome its shortcomings. The low level of living, the loneliness and the many other inconveniences of farm life, added to the lack of education have to be remedied to preserve the goodness and develop other desirabilities of rural life.

Compared to rural conditions, urban situations are in general much better off. Means of transportation and communication are comparatively more advanced than that in its rural counterpart. "Roads, waterways, stream railroads, electric roads--street cars and inter-urbans--air routes, all the vehicles of transportation, telegraphs, telephones, cables, wireless, books, papers and magazines, business and personal correspondence, and word of mouth are direct agencies of communication. There is not one of these that is not more prevalent in the city than in the country."<sup>14</sup> These urban conveniences are however less advanced and less deve-

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<sup>14</sup>

Carl Taylor, Rural Sociology, p. 132.

loped than those of the more industrialized countries. The degree of modernization of the city in a non-industrialized country is still low, but does make urban life far more comfortable than that in rural area. Electricity and running water are common. However they are usually too expensive and thus not widely used for all purposes like in more developed regions. Electricity is used in general for light. As for running water, very few people can provide it for their home. And it involves a rather inconvenient process and takes much time and energy to get it from the public fountains.

The urban community is usually known for its high density of population. But despite the physical proximity of city people, social distance prevails.<sup>15</sup> The lack of fellow-feeling and understanding which characterizes this social distance is quite evident in cities. Even within the family, the members are usually not quite united by common interests and attitudes like those in rural areas. They might work at different hours, in different places, and contact different people. The family thus tends to be somewhat less stable and homogeneous.

On the other hand, this dense population of urban area stimulates the people to some extent. They are more on the eager to move, and are comparatively less bound by old traditions than

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<sup>15</sup>Noel Gist and L.A. Halbert, Urban Society, 3rd ed. (New York, 1949), p. 267.

rural people. They are active and have a greater variety of occupations, and thus a superior economic opportunities than the latter. They vary from office, business job, to trade, skilled and unskilled work. But the main occupation of great number of dwellers of underdeveloped urban areas is trade. The transaction of goods usually involves a long and unnecessary process from producers to consumers. As a result, the price is highly raised, and quite often not uniformly set. Vocational professions are not many and the active production of goods is weak. Industries in these areas demand in general a great deal of manual labor. "Most of the industrial outputs come from handicraft industries scattered in numerous households and small workshops."<sup>16</sup> Unskilled labor in the city is usually in surplus since the population is dense and industries are few.

The conditions of living of city dwellers seem to be far ahead from those of rural regions. Urban area is the center of wealth. Its inhabitants have in general a relatively easier and more comfortable life with their superior schools, churches, literature, art, leisure time, besides many other material conveniences. Park and Burgess called the city, the center of culture, from where gravitates the innovation in social life and in ideas.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Unesco, Youth and Fundamental Education, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup>Robert E. Park, et.al., The City (Chicago, 1925), p. 185.

But if one examines it closely, he cannot pass without notice the pitiful life of a good number of its inhabitants. They are the unskilled workers, the migratory laborers, fishermen, fishermen, refugees and other submerged poor in the city slums. Their life is a hard life. They are the ones whom Frank Laubach would call "the silent victims, the forgotten men"<sup>18</sup> of society.

In the midst of noise and seemingly endless activities of the urban community, and among the wealth of many well-to-do people their sufferings are not heard. For clothing, they are not better than their friends in the country, even though urban people are, as a whole, well dressed than the latter. Their shelter might be a small house, rented and shared among two or more families; it might be a sampan, a boat-house, or any roofed corner where they can lay down their heads. Their meals are quite often unbalanced, and not always sufficient because their incomes are inadequate, and oftentimes irregular.

The difference between rich and poor in the city is very pronounced. The death rate in rural area is less variable from class to class than in city, where medical facilities and health service are available, but quite expensive for the poor to afford. As a result, "the city, on the average, increases the average length of life of superiors and decreases that of inferiors."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Frank Laubach, Silent People Speak (New York, 1943), p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ernest Burgess, The Urban Community (Chicago, 1927), p. 83.

As a whole, the death rate is comparatively higher in urban than in rural area. It is due to the congested type of living in the first which involves much of indoor work, lack of fresh air, and greater exposure to large variety of pathogenic organisms, and thus results in greater possibilities for contagious diseases and death.

Concerning the level of education, formal and informal, it is much higher in urban than in rural community. There are more educational facilities, in terms of manpower, equipment, and agencies. But, just like in any other question, the poor generally are not able to secure needed education for themselves as well as for their children, even when they are aware of the importance of education in a complex world of a urban setup. The main reason is lack of financial means. And when education is free, they still cannot afford to spend their time and energy for education while the basic needs of the daily living are urgently pressing on them.

And as summary, one may say without exaggeration that improperly clothed, poorly housed, undernourished, diseased, illiterate and frequently exploited are the characteristics of the rural people as well as those underprivileged poor, labor workers of the urban areas. Their lives are an unending series of worries, of famine, drought, and diseases. They cannot express their wishes; they are the silent people of the earth; they are the forgotten men. Desperate, "they will grasp any hand that is extended to help them. Therein, lies our hope--and our responsibility"<sup>20</sup> for

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<sup>20</sup>Frank Laubach, "Literacy As a Base for World Peace," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXIII (October 1951), 85.

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Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947

Article III - 1947



### CHAPTER III

#### FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION CONTENT FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Rural and urban people of underdeveloped country, as has been noted in the previous chapter, are not alike. "They often speak differently, act differently, dress differently, and even think differently. This is a result of the different environmental influences thrust upon them by the physical, social and economic characteristics of the communities in which they live."<sup>1</sup> They are different, but the problems of poverty, ignorance, diseases, and high death rate, are common to them.

The fundamental education program designed to help them raise their standards of living, has to gear its efforts toward solving these immediate problems. Quite often, because of the crying needs for economic development, many less developed countries, particularly those which recently obtained their independence, and set forth for rapid reconstruction, are quite puzzled knowing not where to start. Literacy or economic relief first? These problems are very crucial and related one to another as the links

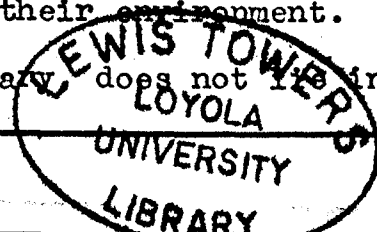
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<sup>1</sup>Burton W. Kreitlow, Rural Education: Community Backgrounds (New York, 1954), p. 69.

of a unbroken chain. They form a vicious circle and have to be attacked, not one at the expense of the other, but all at the same time if possible.

Fundamental education has no definite nor universal set of courses designed to meet this situation. Being very sensitive to the conditions and needs of each locality, it varies from place to place, and from time to time. However, it involves in general strong literacy campaign, training in basic occupational skills, as well as educating in the elementary knowledge of living. The latter includes of course the inculcating of proper and fruitful use of leisure time which is quite often neglected in an under-developed country. Basically, these elements in fundamental education are the same for the rural and urban community. But because of the different characteristics of each area; the emphasis and methods of approach may be different to certain extent.

There is no doubt about the need for literacy. It is a guard against fraud, a means in gathering world knowledge of new methods and techniques for improvement. Besides, it is a needed device for social communication, especially in urban center where social contact and communication are much more complicated and rather relevant. The urban workers have to read, for instance, mute directions, notices, and the like, very often in their daily living. It is therefore necessary for them to overcome illiteracy as soon as possible, in order to live effectively in their environment. The first problem of rural area, on the contrary, does not lie in



illiteracy but rather in the rapid economic reconstruction and development. Literacy is only of secondary importance, especially when communication is primarily based on personal contact rather on written words. However, it is still a "must" for the community development to be successful, rapid, and sound. Thus, literacy is needed both in rural and urban society. If there is any difference it is rather in the relative degree of urgency.

The lack of literacy in underdeveloped country, may be charged up to its poverty, its static life, to the selective system of education, which favors only a privileged few. It might be due to the opposition of land and industrial leaders for fear to lose their tremendous profits in exploiting the ignorant people. It is perhaps a result of an unbalanced provision of education and need-  
ed literature in colloquial languages which lead to a lapse back to illiteracy on the part of the newly literates, especially when they are of illiterate parents. It may be in part the consequence of the reluctant attitude of the people toward education which is often too academic and offers little or no practical knowledge badly needed for the daily living. And none of these previous factors are not more predominant in rural than urban areas. Thus, it is not surprising to find that the percentage of illiteracy is much higher in the first than in the second. There are very few illiteracy statistics along the line of rural and urban grouping, particularly for underdeveloped countries. The following table illustrating the reduction of illiteracy in urban and rural popu-

lation of eight selected countries gives some idea to the situation.

TABLE III<sup>2</sup>

REDUCTION OF ILLITERACY IN THE URBAN AND RURAL POPULATIONS  
OF EIGHT SELECTED COUNTRIES FOR VARIOUS PERIODS  
SINCE ABOUT 1900

Country Age level Period	Areas and Sex	Percentage of Illiteracy		Reduction in percentage
		at the beginning of the period	at the end of the period	
Belgium (15 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1900-1930	<u>Urban</u> <sup>a</sup>			
	Both	20.5	6.5	14.0
	Male	17.9	5.8	12.1
	Female	22.8	7.0	15.8
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Both	18.6	5.1	13.5
	Male	16.2	4.8	11.4
	Female	21.0	5.3	15.7
Bulgaria (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1900-1934	<u>Urban</u> <sup>b</sup>			
	Both	46.6	18.8	27.8
	Male	32.4	11.3	21.1
	Female	62.2	26.5	35.7
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Both	76.8	35.2	41.6
	Male	60.7	21.9	38.8
	Female	93.5	48.3	45.2
Canada (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1921-1931	<u>Urban</u> <sup>c</sup>			
	Male	3.6	2.7	0.9
	Female	2.7	2.0	0.7
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Male	7.7	6.1	1.6
	Female	6.5	4.9	1.6
Cuba (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1899-1943	<u>Urban</u> <sup>d</sup>	26.8	9.1	17.7
	<u>Rural</u>	66.7	33.8	32.9

<sup>2</sup>Unesco, Progress of Literacy in Various Countries (Paris, 1953), from Table 170, p. 189-190.

TABLE III  
(continued)

Country Age level Period	Areas and Sex	Percentage of Illiteracy		Reduction in percentage
		at the beginning of the period	at the end of the period	
Finland (15 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1900-1930	<u>Urban</u> <sup>b</sup>			
	Both	24.0	4.3	19.7
	Male	21.1	3.3	17.8
	Female	26.9	5.0	21.9
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Both	67.0	19.0	48.0
	Male	63.8	17.9	45.9
	Female	70.3	20.0	50.3
Greece (8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1920-1928	<u>Urban</u> <sup>e</sup>			
	Both	35.1	29.0	6.1
	Male	23.9	17.2	6.7
	Female	48.5	41.0	7.5
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Both	58.2	46.9	11.3
	Male	38.7	26.7	12.0
	Female	76.0	66.4	9.6
Union of South Africa (European or White popu- lation 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1904-1918	<u>Urban</u> <sup>c</sup>			
	Both	4.2	2.1	2.1
	Male	4.4	2.2	2.2
	Female	3.9	2.0	1.9
	<u>Rural</u>			
	Both	7.6	2.0	5.6
	Male	8.4	2.4	6.0
	Female	6.5	1.6	4.9
United States (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1910-1930	<u>Urban</u> <sup>f</sup>	5.1	3.2	1.9
	<u>Rural</u>	10.1	6.0	4.1

<sup>a</sup>Communes of 5,000 or more inhabitants.<sup>b</sup>Cities and towns.<sup>c</sup>Incorporated cities, towns, and villages of all sizes.<sup>d</sup>Cities of 25,000 or more.<sup>e</sup>Municipalities and communes of 10,000 or more.<sup>f</sup>Incorporated places of 2,500 or more.8 $\frac{1}{2}$ . 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ , 15 $\frac{1}{2}$  is equivalent to 8 years old and over, etc.

The rate of progress varies from place to place, lower in rural for one area, and higher in another.<sup>3</sup> However, the high percentage of illiteracy in rural, and particularly that of women, is evident. The following table gives a clearer comparison of illiteracy percentage of women and men of twenty-five selected countries for various periods, since 1900.

TABLE IV<sup>4</sup>

REDUCTION OF ILLITERACY AMONG THE MALE AND FEMALE POPULATION  
IN TWENTY-FIVE SELECTED COUNTRIES, FOR VARIOUS  
PERIODS SINCE ABOUT 1900

Country Age level Period	Sex	Percentage of Illiteracy		Reduction in Percentage
		at the beginning of the period	at the end of the period	
Belgium (15%) 1900-1930	Male	17.1	5.5	11.6
	Female	22.0	6.4	15.6
Brazil (15%) 1920-1940	Male	57.1	49.7	7.4
	Female	72.8	62.4	10.4
Bulgaria (10%) 1900-1931	Male	54.6	19.5	35.1
	Female	87.0	43.3	43.7
Burma (10%) 1901-1931	Male	50.2	38.6	11.6
	Female	94.3	82.5	11.8
Canada (10%) 1921-1946	Male	6.4	4.8	1.6
	Female	5.0	3.6	1.4
Ceylon (5%) 1901-1946	Male	58.0	29.9	28.1
	Female	91.5	56.2	35.3
Chili <sup>1</sup> (10%) 1907-1940	Male	46.9	24.6	22.3
	Female	52.9	28.2	24.7

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., from Table 165, pp. 178-179.

TABLE IV  
(Continued)

Country Age level Period	Sex	Percentage of Illiteracy		Reduction in Percentage
		at the beginning of the period	at the end of the period	
Columbia <sup>1</sup> (10/) 1918-1939	Male Female	54.5 60.0	41.7 46.5	12.8 13.9
Cuba <sup>2</sup> (10/) 1907-1937	Male Female	55.4 58.3	24.9 22.2	30.5 36.1
Egypt (10/) 1907-1937	Male Female	87.0 98.6	76.6 93.9	10.4 4.7
Finland (15/) 1901-1946	Male Female	58.0 64.0	15.1 16.6	43.3 47.4
France (10/) 1920-1928	Male Female	13.5 19.4	3.2 3.6	10.3 15.8
Greece (10/) 1920-1928	Male Female	33.9 69.7	23.8 59.4	10.1 10.3
Honduras (15/) 1930-1945	Male Female	62.2 70.7	61.3 66.1	0.9 4.6
Hungary (15/) 1920-1941	Male Female	10.5 16.1	5.0 7.6	5.5 8.5
India (10/) 1901-1931	Male Female	88.5 99.3	84.7 97.6	3.8 1.7
Italy <sup>1</sup> (10/) 1921-1931	Male Female	23.3 30.0	17.8 25.2	5.5 4.8
Mexico (10/) 1900-1940	Male Female	73.5 81.8	50.0 57.9	23.5 23.9
Philippines (10/) 1939-1948	Male Female	45.6 56.8	35.6 41.7	10.0 15.1
Portugal <sup>1</sup> (10/) 1900-1940	Male Female	63.9 81.8	41.5 58.5	22.4 23.3
Spain(10/) 1900-1940	Male Female	47.2 69.4	17.3 28.5	29.9 40.9

TABLE IV  
(continued)

Country Age level Period	Sex	Percentage of Illiteracy		Reduction in Percentage
		at the beginning of the period	at the end of the period	
Turkey (10/) 1935-1945	Male Female	68.0 90.1	55.0 83.8	13.0 6.3
Union of So. Africa				
European (10/)	Male Female	5.7 4.9	2.3 1.9	3.4 3.0
1904-1918				
Native of all ages	Male Female	94.5 95.2	78.1 79.5	16.4 15.7
1904-1946				
United States of America (10/)	Male Female	10.1 11.2	4.4 4.3	5.7 6.9
1900-1930				
Yugoslavia (10/)	Male Female	340.3 360.0	15.4 34.4	24.9 25.6
1921-1948				

<sup>1</sup>Criterion of literacy is ability to read.

<sup>2</sup>Criterion of literacy is not uniform for various censuses.

<sup>3</sup>Population 12 years old and over.

5/. 10/, 15/ is equivalent to 5 years old and over, etc.

Progress has been made, but the high illiteracy percentage, for women in particular, still prevails. More than half of the countries under consideration in Table IV have a women illiteracy rate higher than 50 percent at the end of the respective periods. This figure is far from complete, because there are many other areas having high illiteracy rate, but not recorded due to the



lack of needed surveys.

High rate of illiteracy is the most common problem of many countries. And various efforts have been directed toward its extinction. Helping the masses of people become literate is the aim of fundamental education; but in what tongue, their vernacular language or some other internationally used medium? The common people have little or no need or desire for foreign language, unless their daily living and contact require it. Thus, for rural dwellers, foreign language is a great waste, in terms of money, energy and time. Even for urban area, foreign language is still not a necessary factor in the education of the masses. And vernacular language has been found to be the best medium. "Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his (the individual's) mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium."<sup>5</sup> Thus, even when the mother tongue is found not always to be used in school, because of the "political, linguistic, educational, socio-cultural, economic, financial, practical obstacles,"<sup>6</sup> efforts are extended to use it whenever possible.

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<sup>5</sup>Unesco, The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education (Paris, 1953), p. 11.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

Attempts have been made to develop and simplify the written vernacular languages of various countries. Depending on the types of language, phonetic or highly based on scripts, simple or complicated, the key-note method, story-method or the script-method, consisting of grouping scripts of similar shapes into families to teach, may be used. Whatever technique is used, Dr. Laubach suggested that in making the beginner books for illiterates, the "basic" words used should be determined by scientific word count from various sources such as government reports, conversation, school readers, local newspapers, and the like.<sup>7</sup> This device is of great help in eliminating unfamiliar words, obstacles to the rapid comprehension of the people. On the other hand, it gives due allowance for the differentiation of words used, of interests and levels of the people under consideration, rural or urban, adult or children.

To carry out literacy campaign for the masses, Laubach's techniques of "each one teach one" has proved to be very effective. As soon as a lesson is finished, the student copies the written exercises, teaches somebody else, and sets out to teach more students, then comes back for the next lesson.<sup>8</sup> Rather economical it develops a spirit of mutual help among the people, especially for urban community. This tutor method serves well in teaching adult illiterates who are usually very sensitive in making mis-

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<sup>7</sup>Frank Laubach, Silent Billion Speak (New York, 1943), p. 97.

<sup>8</sup>Frank Laubach, Toward a Literate World (New York, 1938), p. 44.

takes before others.

Teaching illiterates does not require high ability, but it involves instead a sense of compassion for them, a little tact to handle them. It is "the humblest, easiest and neediest of tasks, but was quite often neglected because it was too simple, and elementary for highly trained men and women."<sup>9</sup> Fortunately, this situation has been changed and practically all underdeveloped countries are carrying out, one way or another, the campaign for the extinction of illiteracy. While literacy for its own sake has little or no value, it is an important means to help the people help themselves. Experiences everywhere show that "when-ever attempts are made to raise the general level of life, they are easier to carry out if coordinated efforts are made to wipe out illiteracy."<sup>10</sup> With literacy, a basic tools of communication, the people will be able to explore the wisdom and wealth of the world which are stored in books. And if literacy campaign provides them with useful and practical informations and materials to satisfy their interests, and meet their needs, it is doing for them more than if it offered them a "gold mine."<sup>11</sup>

And to be successful, the content of literacy campaign

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<sup>9</sup>Frank Laubach, Silent Billion Speak, p. 194.

<sup>10</sup>Unesco, Inter-American Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education (Paris, 1950), p. 15.

<sup>11</sup>Frank Laubach, Toward A Literate World, p. 5.

should be within the level of understanding of the local people. People from the country side or of urban center do not understand each other's colloquial language, along with the many objects of their daily living. Thus, the campaign will lose much of its effectiveness if wrong materials are given to the wrong type of people. Therefore, the differentiation in the content of literacy materials for rural and urban people is necessary, just the same as it is needed in preparing reading materials for adults and children. And because people lapse back into illiteracy very easily when they have nothing to read at their reading level, special efforts should be given to secure suitable materials for the newly literates. They should be the result of conscious and careful planning. The people's interests, their practical and cultural needs as well as their intellectual and economic levels must be taken into consideration.

Literacy is important and helpful, but it is not altogether indispensable for other instructions. As Allen said, "It must not be thought that it is necessary to withhold instruction in agriculture, home improvement, child care, public health, and other essentials of rural development until the entire population can read and write. People who have been for generation illiterate can profit tremendously from such an assistance in spite of their handicap."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>H.B.Allen, Rural Reconstruction In Action (New York, 1953), p. 81.

Literate or non-literate, in rural or urban community, the people should be aware of the need for improvement of health condition. That is a necessity. No community development can prosper with mass diseases go unchecked. "Endemic diseases may sap the vitality of the whole population and deprive them of the initiative and energy needed to produce more food."<sup>13</sup> It will therefore lead to the vicious circle of malnutrition, poverty, ignorance, and back to diseases. Fundamental education for rural and urban areas alike, should develop with cooperation of other health agencies, a strong community health campaign. It will have a dual purposes of demonstrating the natural causation of diseases and to teach the people to prevent and cure them.

In underdeveloped country, where disease is usually attributed to evil spirit or witchcraft, efforts are needed to change this attitude. To do so, the confidence of the people must be first obtained through curative medicine. And while this is gradually secured, the value and possibilities of personal and community hygiene could be demonstrated, and the elementary principles of hygiene, public health, and preventive medicine, taught.<sup>14</sup> It requires a great deal of tact and psychology to carry the project out successfully. People do not like to be

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<sup>13</sup> Unesco, Fundamental Education: Description and Programme (Paris, 1949), p. 22.

<sup>14</sup> Unesco, The Haiti Pilot Project, Phase One: 1947-1949 (Paris, 1951), p. 68.

lectured bluntly about their incorrect habits. Thus, they should not be driven, but led. "They should be stimulated and induced to express a desire to live more hygienically."<sup>15</sup> Unless the people take active interest and full cooperation in the program, it will grow cold and die out when the fundamental education leaders move away.

A good health project cannot be built on poor environmental sanitation. Sources of communicable diseases such as insects, contaminated water supply, inadequate protection of foods and the like must be checked. The students of fundamental education might launch, for example, a "clean-up" project in the community. They can carry out campaign in liquidating mosquitos by using D.D. T., or by destroying their breeding sources: waste of all kinds are to be properly discarded, stagnant ponds, drained. These projects are of large scale and need cooperation from other related agencies, such as FAO, WHO, etc...

The health and hygiene of the masses of the people are in general largely in the hands of the women. But in most under-developed countries, the education of women is usually inadequate, especially in rural area where traditions against it are rather predominant. This lack of education of women is one of the reason of the backward condition of many countries. "Their ignorance," as the United States Office of Education puts it, "not

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<sup>15</sup> H.B.Allen, Rural Reconstruction, p. 32.

only impedes improvement in the health of the people and the betterment of their home; but deprives the men of companionship in marriage and the future generations of the benefit of enlightened motherhood, which should mould their physical, mental, and moral character in its earliest and most impressionable period."<sup>16</sup>

While they remain uneducated, little or no progress can be made. Thus, the fundamental education program should give special attention to the education of women. Courses in nutrition, preparation and preservation of foods, in child care, and first aid, or in other elements of home economics should be offered in a rural as well as an urban community.

The basic knowledge in health and sanitation are needed both for rural and urban life. The difference, if there is any, lies rather in the techniques of approach than in the content as such. Home visits, demonstration, or audio-visual aids may be used simultaneously for the two areas. However, special attention is needed. In using for example audio-visual aids as medium of instruction, one must be aware of the different mentality of the local people. The materials and the presentation for simple rural folk, in particular, should be as realistic and close to their scope of experiences as possible. Great deal of explanation and repetition are needed to put the idea across to them.

While help the people improving their health is important, it

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<sup>16</sup>United States Office of Education, Fundamental Education (Washington, D.C., 1948), p. 6.

is not sufficient. Men need to live, not only healthy, but also fit--fit into the environment in which they live, the family, the community, and the society at large. Too often, because of lack of education, rural people as well as their underprivileged friends in urban area, do not know much about things beyond their family limit. Because of their ignorance, they are usually afraid of the unseen natural forces, and afraid of the complex society about them for they are oftentimes ill-treated and exploited. To help them better their life, fundamental education must impart to them some important knowledge in simple and practical science so they can live intelligently in their physical environment.

Basic geography and history are useful in helping them know and appreciate other peoples and their ways of life as well as their countries. Added to that, civics should not be at the least neglected, for it will make them aware of their rights and responsibilities in society. Unless they realize their basic human rights and responsibilities, social abuses and injustice, of which they are the victims, will be slow and difficult to extinguished. Other subjects might be added to this list for general but basic education as the need arises.

These elementary knowledges are important and needed for the people to live a fuller life. However, when they are desperately without means to satisfy their urgent needs of daily living, good health and education are only mere empty words for them. Fundamental education "is doomed to failure if it raises the cultural



and social aspirations of the people while leaving the economic basis of their life at a bare subsistence level which is incapable of satisfying them."<sup>17</sup> And the economic improvement of the people is thus essential and constitutes, so to speak, the core of fundamental education program.

To help the people in rural area better their technically backward condition, fundamental education has a wide range of subject matters which can be offered. What to do first will depend on the local level of development and its urgent needs. To improve the agricultural output, the program involves instruction in:

- better methods of land management, which include conserving or restoring the fertility of the soil by use of compost and manures, irrigation and drainage, the control of erosion, and wise use of forests;
- improved methods of cultivating crops, by rotation, ploughing-in of cover crops, fencing and the use of new tools or machines, seed selection and the control or elimination of plant diseases and pests;
- introduction of new food or cash crops to suit the people needs; here the care of fruit trees is important.<sup>18</sup>

Besides agriculture as the main source of support, rural people sometimes supplement their family income with profits from sale of fattened cattle and from breeding. But too often, it does not amount too much because of lack of scientific knowledge,

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<sup>17</sup>Unesco, The Haiti Pilot Project, Phase One: 1947-1949, p.72.

<sup>18</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description and Programme, p. 27.

Therefore, fundamental education curriculum should try to impart needed informations in improved methods and techniques of animal husbandry, including selective breeding, grazing and feeding, fodder crops and simple veterinary practice. And if possible, the technique of "mixed farming" might be introduced. Furthermore, it can instruct the people in the methods of "storage, cleaning, and processing of produce, leading to marketing and distribution, and possibly to secondary industries."<sup>19</sup> During the non-farming season, in particular, these small industries or other crafts may be developed to help them increase their yearly income.

To protect the poor from the den of usurers, cooperatives are of great help. In case of rural credit cooperatives for example, to borrow money, with low interest, the individual may be subjected to certain requirements: he has to keep good record of prompt payment; or perhaps, he is asked to use selected seeds or to employ modern techniques in cultivation already demonstrated; he might be obliged to do one of the many things which leads to needed change and progress. With this process, "the rural credit cooperatives not only free the borrower from the toils of usurer; they may also free him from his own bad habits or from routine, induce him to become punctual, to save his money and to exercise foresight and train him to adopt better technical methods. They are valuable not only from the point of view of economic develop-

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 27-28.

ment but also simultaneously, from that of education."<sup>20</sup> Therefore in its program, fundamental education should not undervalue the place of cooperatives, and instruction in the methods of cooperative organization for production, selling, and buying should be given whenever possible.

Cooperatives are not only important for rural people, but also for urban workers as well. In the way, they help them to save money, to better their income, and therefore, their standards of living. Furthermore, they help them develop a sense of group spirit, of fellowship which are quite often lacked in urban society. On the other hand, fundamental education for urban people should particularly encourage them develop local crafts and small industries. Hat industries, hand embroidery, carpentry, pottery, toy making, or any other occupations are all useful. They will be thus able to contribute to the active production of the country instead of making their living on excessive transaction of goods, which is quite common in less developed urban areas. Besides, with a more or less steadfast new occupation, their income will be less insecure and their living will therefore be more assured.

In these attempts to help the people in less developed areas better their life, great deal of demonstration is needed. For being somewhat isolated from the rest of the world, and thus not

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<sup>20</sup> Maurice Columbian, Cooperatives and Fundamental Education (Unesco, Paris, 1950), p. 21.

acquainted with any other ways of life, they are reluctant to discard the old for fear that the new will turn out to be less adequate. Therefore, in order to change some of the undesirable old ways, demonstrations both in technique and result are indispensable. However, showing the better ways is not sufficient.

"Showing better ways must include understanding of the improved method and conviction of its practicability and desirability!"<sup>21</sup>

Examining all these important subject matters in fundamental education for rural and urban areas, one cannot pass without mention the place of the use of leisure time in its curriculum. It is the most neglected aspects in the conditions of less developed country. Leisure time is considered as a luxury and belongs to the well-to-do people. The common people in rural area or the poor in urban center have to work hard to maintain their living. Entertaining devices, such as theater, movies, and the like, quite common in urban area, are too expensive for them. Furthermore, they do not have much time left to be called leisure. And if they have any, it is not always fruitfully spent. Besides some occasional festivals, games or folkplays which are to be encouraged, gambling and drinking are not too unusual.

After a long and usually monotonous day of work, the people need to rest and recreate in order to keep their balance and

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<sup>21</sup>William Cyril Osgood, An Adult Education Program for Orissa, India (Oregon, 1950), p. 41.

promote good health. Thus, in helping them secure for themselves a healthier, fuller, and happier life, fundamental education should not underestimate the recreational aspect of its program. It should try to develop in the people a better use of leisure time for physical, intellectual, or cultural progress. Measures could be taken to stimulate athletic activities among youth, to motivate and develop folk songs, dances, games, and plays, or the like. Clubs of various interests could be organized, especially in urban regions where people of similar interest are more numerous. Fairs or exhibits might be planned on local or inter-provincial scale to broaden their interests. Entertainment at first seems to be of secondary importance, but as a matter of fact, it is not unnecessary. More than once, it is the effective means to get the people interested in the fundamental education program. That is the opening way to friendship, a starting point for the success of any project which needs the cooperation of the people.

Besides, the religious and moral education should not be ignored. As a matter of fact, it is the primary motive for many of the educational activities directed by various missions in underdeveloped areas. The ethical and spiritual training should emerge with the whole curriculum of the fundamental education program. However, moral and spiritual instruction should be aware of the fact that "many of the tensions, maladjustments and misunderstandings that exist between groups and individuals are

attributable to religious and ideological intolerance."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, special care must be taken to assist the people "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours."<sup>23</sup> Moral and spiritual development is the most important factor to everybody's life, no matter where they come from, rural or urban community.

Those are a few characteristics in the general sketches of fundamental education curriculum for rural and urban areas in less developed country. What are the peculiar features in carrying them out in those two regions is another question to be examined.

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<sup>22</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description and Programme, p. 47.

<sup>23</sup>United Nations, Department of Public Information, Basic Education for All, The United Nations, 10th ed. (United Nations, New York, 1954), p.1.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODS AND TECHNIQUES IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION FOR RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Fundamental education is education in the fundamentals of life. The methods and techniques used in fundamental education to combat ignorance, poverty and diseases of the masses, and to promote community development in less developed country are often-times different from those used in formal education. Like the fundamental education curriculum, the methods and techniques are ever changing with the local conditions and needs of the community under consideration. However, as a whole, they have some peculiar features of their own.

In organizing a fundamental education program, the basic principles for rural and urban areas are practically the same. The motto "help the people help themselves" summarizes somewhat the whole philosophy of method behind this movement. Fundamental education, a design to help the people solve their urgent problems of living and better themselves, requires for its success methods which enlist the active interest and full cooperation of the people toward whom it is directed. Their confidence must first be won. "New methods of production, more profitable ways of orga-

nizing the life of the community, have to be understood and their advantages appreciated before they can be adopted, and new techniques learned before new habits can be practiced. There is no question of coercion or imposition here, for nothing can be introduced successfully without the willing cooperation of those for whom it is intended."<sup>1</sup>

It is not an easy matter to raise the economic level, improve the health--in other words, change the standard of living of any retarded group, especially when it is among the people whose lives have been static for countless years. Traditional ways cannot be changed in a day. And it is not wise to attempt such speedy change or reform.<sup>2</sup> This point of view is also expressed by Alex Graham who said that "No field worker will look for speed who sees fundamental education as a process aimed at bringing the community to an awareness of its own problems and the fixing of its own end. This is the road to responsibility, not to mere conformity or obedience, and this is the longer road."<sup>3</sup>

To help the people help themselves, the program needs to be within the limit of local human and material resources. The

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<sup>1</sup>Unesco, Youth and Fundamental Education (Paris, 1954), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>H. B. Allen, Rural Reconstruction in Action (New York, 1953) p. xiii.

<sup>3</sup>Alex G. Graham, "Some Aims and Methods of Fundamental Education," in Phillips Ruopp, ed., Approaches to Community Development (The Hague, Bandung, 1953), p. 216.



objectives should be reasonable and within the reach of the people; otherwise, failure will result in a major setback, materially and psychologically. The common people in underdeveloped country are usually too poor to take a risk of loss without detrimental effect on their very existence. Besides, once deceived by the ineffectiveness of the fundamental education program, they will get and hold a distrustful attitude which causes great obstacle to future attempt for improvement. Thus, the program should be carefully and modestly planned and started from the very beginning so that good result can be obtained. And when the people are convinced of the possibility of success of the program, measures for faster improvement may be taken later on.

The program should be planned with as well as for the people. In that way, they will develop an attitude of self-help, of leadership and responsibility which are oftentimes lacked. This method also promotes the active interests of the people, an important condition for success and for long lasting of the program. Planning with the people does not necessarily imply that the program be determined solely by them, for quite often they do not sense their own status or true level of development and, even if they are aware of this, they do not know how to better their lives.

In organizing a fundamental education program, one should be conscious of the fact that to be successful, the program must also grow in good harmony with their culture. Culture here has a

wide connotation. "It includes the native skills, methods, and tools of the people. It embraces their habits, their formal and informal modes of association and organization, the structure of their collective living. It encompasses their belief, practices, values, taboos, and faiths."<sup>4</sup> Some of those factors need to be renovated in order to raise the people's level of living. And in such effort, fundamental education program must not liquidate the local traditional and moral sanctions until they can be replaced by others that are more valid and are as well adapted to the people's thought and culture. Besides, any attempt to help the people solve their urgent needs must be recognized by the people themselves. There is no place in fundamental education for the view that people should be "disciplined into progress either by force or by the cut-and-dried plans of well-intentioned outsiders."<sup>5</sup>

With those general principles as guidelines, how should a fundamental education program proceed? The first step is to make some basic surveys on national and local scale. The first will "reveal the areas in greatest need of fundamental education, the extent of illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, and disease, the degree of education development already achieved in each area, and the location and extent of existing enterprises operating in the

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<sup>4</sup>Edmund Brunner and Yang Hsin Pao, Rural America and the Extension Service (New York, 1949), p. 177.

<sup>5</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description and Programme (Unesco, Paris, 1949), p. 16.

fundamental education field."<sup>6</sup> Local surveys on the other hand, should provide, if possible, information concerning the geography of the area, material resources, demography an anthropology, social political structure, agriculture, animal husbandry, health, nutrition, local arts and crafts, spiritual background, educational structure and material needed.<sup>7</sup>

The findings of these initial surveys will form the basis for planning fundamental education program in terms of special problems, needs and potentialities of the area. On the other hand, the data obtained also will guide the preparation of materials for fundamental education for adults and children, for rural and urban communities with consideration to the specific factors of language, culture, customs and economic activities of the people. And the findings will provide, besides, a yardstick against which the subsequent progress of the project can be measured.<sup>8</sup> To secure accurate data and to avoid to some extent suspicions or resistance, these surveys should be cautiously carried out, or even postponed if necessary, until the field workers are fully accepted by the community. And the first stage of the program initiated to win the confidence of the people may be launched simultaneously with, or before the surveys.

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<sup>6</sup>United States Office of Education, Fundamental Education (Washington, 1948), p. 21.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description..., pp. 52-53.

When the campaign for fundamental education is launched, when the confidence of the people has been more or less secured, and when the data of surveys obtained, certain of the outstanding local problems may be selected for attack. These preferably should be only a few problems so that manpower and material resources may be intensively focused toward limited objectives. The size of the area to be covered will depend on the resources available, the prevailing physical and social conditions, and the level of educational development already achieved, on transportation, homogeneity of language, and many other practical considerations. It is suggested that the problems selected should be of impersonal implication so that to avoid unnecessary oppositions on the part of the involved persons, at least at the beginning. The support of the people of influence and authority in the community is helpful for rapid success.

The methods appropriate to carry out the selected projects are then to be chosen. All available facilities of the community, educational, social or other, should be used to the best benefit of the program. Youth or adult organizations, parish or community groups, or any other voluntary agencies, if there are any, are helpful sources of manpower and material. Other international or national set-ups may provide some financial or technical assistance for the project.

And the last step in organizing the fundamental education program is evaluation, to estimate the progress and to discover

the shortcomings. Quite often, fundamental education projects tend to have excessive concern for spectacular, "show-window. psychology."<sup>9</sup> And on the other hand, undirected and sporadic activities may sometimes occur because of the absence of a definite and fixed plan of action in fundamental education. Therefore, fundamental education needs, more than any other program, a regular and periodic evaluation of the work to eliminate the unappropriate and wasteful factors. The objectives of the program should serve as the constant guide for the workers to check up on their activities.

Those are the general steps in launching fundamental education program. Projects have been carried out everywhere, especially in rural communities. The starting point of attack varies from one project to another. The objectives might be for agricultural improvement, health, literacy, or for any other aspect of rural life. However, the steps followed are more or less the same. The community development project at Bactad, Philippines is a good concrete illustration of the launching process of fundamental education program for rural area.

This is a five weeks project carried out by several community groups headed by the Community Council: Youth Adult Association, Model Community Association, the Parent Teacher Association, and

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<sup>9</sup>Ismael Rodriguez Bou, "Pointers on Illiteracy," School and Society, LXXVII (January 1953), 21.

the Barangay Association. After surveying the conditions and needs of the Bactad village, it was decided that every yard in the village should be fenced, to keep the compounds of poultry and pigs from the house as far as possible so that plants and gardens would not be damaged. Simple and sanitary toilets were to be built, drainage systems under the kitchen of each house were to be constructed. Each one of those projects had one committee in charge, headed by adults with cooperation of all others. Demonstrations were arranged in fencing, constructing of toilets and the like, and discussion groups were organized to learn and discuss the practical consequences of their projects, the cost and the durability of materials used. Contests in those projects with cash prizes which would help the family with modest means increase its food supply. At the end of the project, it was observed that the home became a more comfortable and sanitary place to live in. Besides, in building up the standard of the home, gambling has disappeared, marking an important change in the moral life of the people.<sup>10</sup>

In most urban areas, institutions for social welfare and adult education are generally already present and carrying out in fact some fundamental education programs. "What is required is therefore to coordinate their work rather than to launch fresh

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<sup>10</sup> Pedro Orata, "Philippines Village Improves Itself," Educational Digest, XVII (February 1952), 46-48.

projects."<sup>11</sup> Life in urban community is more organized than in rural area. And the need for basic surveys may be thus less obvious than in the non-urban areas. However, in planning systematically fundamental education for urban underprivileged groups, sociological survey is important to discover the deficiencies in existing social and educational services, and the special needs and aspirations of the people, in order to remedy what is lacked. When the survey is made and specific problems have been selected, a plan of action and techniques, including the last stage of evaluation is to be set up and carried out.

There are more facilities in terms of manpower and material set-up to carry out fundamental education in urban than in rural areas. There is greater supply of reading materials; museums and other educational plants are more numerous; there are more opportunities to organize evening classes, exhibitions, excursions or various other clubs and discussion groups. In rural areas, the situation is much less favorable and it is more difficult to administer fundamental education projects. Another contrast between the problems of rural and urban program in fundamental education comes from the fact that in a rural community, all or nearly all of the people live on the same economic, social, and vocational level and they do not have the stimulus to change or improve their ways of living. On the other hand, in an urban area,

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<sup>11</sup>Unesco, The Right to Education (Paris, 1952), p. 20.

there are many standards of living, many levels of education, many different occupations. The urban dweller therefore is aroused by his urban, varied environment to seek change and to look for training which will help him live as he sees some of his more fortunate neighbors living.

Special devices are therefore needed for rural community. While the program in urban area is more along the line of adult education, that of rural region is along that of extension service. It is "out-of-school, roadside education"<sup>12</sup> which is designed to "help rural families apply science to the day-by-day routine of farming, homemaking, and other aspects of rural living."<sup>13</sup> Aiming at producing change and to teach the people more excellent ways, extension is inevitably an assault upon accepted procedures sanctioned by the habit of the years. The most effective method of approach is demonstration, method-demonstration and, particularly, result-demonstration. Sometimes, the rural program involves the selection of a site in a village as center to carry out the work. People from rural areas will come there for instruction and go back to their locality to practice. The center should be therefore at a convenient location so that people from a wide radius can profit from it. Quite often, such a location is

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<sup>12</sup>Brunner and Yang, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>Edmund Brunner, et.al, eds., Farmers of the World: The Development of Agricultural Extension (New York, 1945), p.1.



difficult to secure, because of the relatively isolated set-up of rural communities. It must also be remembered that the lack of progressive individuals in rural areas usually affects the effectiveness of a demonstration-center. Instead of having the people coming to him for advices, the fundamental education worker has to go to them to offer his help.

Since the needs of the people are manifold, the fundamental education project for them will inevitably involve a wide range of activities. But individual efforts and material resources are limited. This condition requires a special set-up whereby fundamental educators can work together in a united front. Thus organized, the ground can be divided among the team members of different skills and knowledge to be attacked. The work will therefore result, not only in an aspect of, but in "an integrated pattern-- a 'design for living' for the community."<sup>14</sup> Union is strength: work together not only helps to bring better result, but also helps the members overcome the feeling of loneliness and despair before the immensity of the job they face. And the value of this field team approach to fundamental education has been increasingly recognized. China depends on the use of teams for her mass education movement. Turkey is doing the same for her rural areas.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description and Programme, p. 54.

<sup>15</sup>United States Office of Education, Fundamental Education, p. 23.

Everywhere, field team approach is advocated and used.

Fundamental education field teams have the functions of carrying out the basic surveys, of drawing up the plans of action and preparing curricula and educational materials according to the problems, requirements and potentialities of the environment. And besides its major work of putting the program into operation, the field team has to train local leaders, teachers, and workers.<sup>16</sup> This is one of the most important factors in the success of the program. In "The Concept of a Team," A.G. Dickson maintained that: The function of a team lies in its capacity not so much to demonstrate technical expertise, as to arouse initially an emotional response and therefore to train a group of potential leaders in that area for a sufficient period to enable some of them, at least to carry on this work when the team has left.<sup>17</sup>

The size of a team varies from place to place, usually from five to ten. It should be "large enough to permit specialization, but not so large as to give the impression that the team, rather than the local people, will be doing the work."<sup>18</sup> In general, it includes a team leader, or chairman, who organizes, coordinates, orientates and supervises the project. The literacy teacher has

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> A.G. Dickson, "The Concept of a Team," in Philipps Kuopp, ed., Approaches to Community Development (The Hague, Netherland, 1953), p. 236.

<sup>18</sup> Unesco, Fundamental Education, Description..., p. 55.

to organize groups of illiterates in the village and teach them the basic tools of three R's, to help and encourage village people with some education to take over the work. The home agent, on the other hand, is responsible for the improvement of the home conditions. And along with him, the nurse will carry out campaign for health and hygiene and provide needed assistance in eliminating diseases. The teacher of practical agriculture and related activities will be in charge of the betterment of farming methods. And not to forget the use of leisure time, the recreational director will organize recreational activities for the community. The instructor of cottage industries, the carpentry teacher and the audio-visual mobile unit operator are the other team members suggested by the mission to Burma.<sup>19</sup> Other members may be added. The number of team members as well as their specialities will depend upon the conditions and needs of the local community.

Team work organized under the form of schools on wheel is an adaptation of the demonstration center to the conditions of rural communities in underdeveloped country. Equipment for demonstration is carried in a car or truck from place to place. Varying with the season, it consists sometimes, of new farming instruments for demonstration, a portable garden with growing plants and vegetables, or materials needed to give concrete illus-

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<sup>19</sup>Tisinger, Hernandez and Fairey, Report of the Mission to Burma, Unesco Educational Missions No.III (Paris, 1951), pp.74-76.

tration in how to prepare the land, to fertilize it and to plant the garden. Lessons are given also in cooking, canning, cleaning, care of animals and in many other aspects of fundamental education. Demonstrations are given in successive days in the neighborhoods of the community and thus provide a more or less definite schedule for each area.

Work along this line of approach is quite limited and sometimes appears as mere show-circus. Due to the fact that the field workers do not have enough time to be with the people, since they have to move about constantly, they are more or less regarded as outsiders. The confidence of the people is thus hard to win, and the fundamental education program cannot fulfil at its best the desired objectives. Besides, local leaders cannot be effectively motivated or trained with this show-circus technique. Moreover, it requires extra time, energy, and money to travel from place to place; there is, on the other hand, the troublesome and inconvenience of carrying around needed equipment for demonstration.

The most adaptable approach to the rural condition is perhaps that of temporary stationary teams. Instead of travelling all the time, the members of the team stay in one community for two or more years to organize and carry out fundamental education projects until the people are capable of carrying it out themselves. Then the team will move to another area and start the work anew. In this procedure, the team is able to profit from both the demonstration center approach and that of the movable

school.

Added to these different approaches in organizing fundamental education projects for rural and urban areas, the question of adaptable methods of teaching also requires special consideration. In general, this involves the use of objective methods and means, including exhibits, demonstrations, filmstrips, motion pictures, or the like. On the other hand, oral methods of teaching are commonly adopted through meetings, group discussions, farm and home visits and radio. Besides, for the literates and new literates, printed materials such as bulletins, posters, circulating libraries, newsletters are of great help in preserving their literacy and in supplying needed informations to better their lives. Anyone of those media is easier to apply to urban than to rural areas, because of the relative lack in human and physical facilities of the latter. However, efforts have been made to better this condition.

Among those elements, mass communication is a relevant feature of fundamental education program. Audio-visual aids, in particular, are of great importance with their vivid and easy means of communication covering large audience. On the one hand, they serve as aids to literacy teaching, on the other hand, as the main method of instruction, especially when the teaching staff is small or the majority of the masses are illiterate. Practically the whole content of a fundamental education program is susceptible to be treated by means of film or radio. But little

has been done along this line because of great financial obstacles. Transmitters and receiving sets, film projectors and films are too expensive for general use. Besides, the scarcity of electricity, especially in rural areas, adds more barriers to their wide use, along with the lack of adequate films for illiterates and for educationally backward communities. The use of audio-visual aids is still in the experimenting stage. However, their great potentiality for success and significant importance in fundamental education program are gradually recognized, and efforts have been given to make greater use of them. In Mexico, for instance, two special missions for motorized and cinematographic purposes were organized along with its forty-eight rural missions and five other special missions for workers' districts.<sup>20</sup>

It is generally observed that audio-visual aids need to take into consideration the level and condition of life of the people for whom they are given. The techniques used for urban area may not be applicable to rural folk. Children and country dwellers, having no previous experience with the media of cinema, for example, cannot easily interpret motion pictures. A group of rural Mexican was shown a film on water purification whereby the contaminated water was colored red. After the session, the people left assured that their water was pure for it had never been red.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Lloyd Hughes, The Mexican Cultural Mission Programme (Unesco, Paris, 1950), p. 21.

<sup>21</sup>Unesco, Learn and Live (Paris, 1951), p. 26.

The proper methods of organization and of teaching in fundamental education are the keys to success of the program. But the latter cannot be promoted if the fundamental educators or field workers are not adequately trained. Methods are important, but will be of no use if the teachers do not know or do not put them into practice. Like any other type of teachers, fundamental educators are the instruments through which the educational program is carried out. Thus, their proper training is indispensable, whether they will work in rural or urban community.

Besides a general education, teachers in fundamental education need some professional training in this particular field. The general background of the whole field as well as some special aptitude for a particular aspect of the program should be mastered. Practical experiences are helpful for the success of the teachers, especially in fundamental education which is education for living. On the other hand, since the people attend the program only on a voluntary basis, the character and temperament of the teachers are of great importance. They should be patient, humble, have compassion for the people and a ready understanding of their problems, needs, and aspirations. They should be, not only able to teach others, but also to learn from them. In rural community in particular, the basic knowledge of rural life, the sympathy with rural people, and willingness to serve in out-of-the way areas are the most essential qualification, and take precedence

over formal education.<sup>22</sup> Yet, this too is one of the important criteria for the selection of staff members for rural community.

The training of teachers or workers in fundamental education is part of the total educational system, and needs the assistance of all available teachers' training institutions, university departments, or any other training centers. It involves "(a) the training of 'foreign' workers and field teams to go into less developed areas and initiate fundamental education projects or campaigns; (b) the training of workers in the fields, especially in project centers; (c) teachers' and workers' seminars and study conferences and training courses in more advanced communities."<sup>23</sup> The latter may be regarded more or less as in-service-training program. It is not of little importance for it helps develop a sense of common effort among the workers and provides them with needed refresher courses.

Training of 'foreign' teachers is well illustrated by the program of Unesco at Patzcuaro, Mexico. The course of study lasts twenty-one months with five distinct phases. After the introductory period whereby the students contribute their experiences and knowledge from their respective countries, concerning various aspects of fundamental education programs, instructors then conduct a seminar in general principles, methods and objectives of

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<sup>22</sup>H.B.Allen, Rural Reconstruction in Action, p. 194.

<sup>23</sup>U.S.Office of Education, Fundamental Education, p. 25.



the program. The students are divided later into teams and each team is assigned a village. Basic surveys are made and during the fourth phase, fundamental education projects for each village are worked out with the assistance of the teaching staff. And finally, the teams are sent to their respective villages to live there and try out their plans, for a period of about two weeks. Then they continue to work during the day and review the results at night at the center.<sup>24</sup> When the training is finished, the students return to their countries and carry out the work.

This plan of training is on an international basis, it may be very well reduced to a smaller scale, on a national level. Besides the people who want to take up the work in fundamental education as their full time profession, others can be encouraged in this work. The regular students, for instance, can be organized into work teams. They will take extra training courses in town during the school year, and work together during their summer vacation in a rural community. They will live among the countrymen and help them according to the fundamental education plan. Thus proceeding, they will make good use of their vacation by contributing to the welfare of the nation; and the lack of manpower supply to carry out fundamental education work in rural area may be thus lessened to some extent.

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<sup>24</sup>Unesco, The Right to Education, pp. 49-50.

The training of local workers is particularly necessary for the continuation of the program, when the team has to move away. Various measures have been taken along this line. The Haiti Pilot Project, for instance, gave a provision for a two-year course of training for fifty young Haitians as school teachers, adult and community education workers. They were given instruction in the general background of the whole field of fundamental education and in some special aptitude for at least one particular aspect of the program. The community fundamental education program in school, adult center, clinic or farm, and the like, serve as training ground for them until they become more expert and qualified to work on their own.<sup>25</sup>

The problem of teachers' training in fundamental education is common to both rural and urban community, and is, among all others, a key to good success of the program. It is new but needy field in education. There are many problems to be solved yet, and many aspects to be taken into consideration. This field is broad and needs close cooperation of all agencies, whether voluntary or public, local, national or international.

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<sup>25</sup>Unesco, The Haiti Pilot Project, Phase One: 1947-1949 (Paris, 1951), p. 65.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Improperly clothed, poorly housed, undernourished, diseased, illiterate, and frequently exploited--such is the fate of millions of inhabitants of this planet, especially those in underdeveloped countries. These conditions lead up to much of the unrest and turmoil of the present day world. Fundamental education is perhaps the proper means to change this condition for those unfortunate people. It is, one may say, the direct antithesis of the colonial philosophy and economic policy. "Instead of regarding the ignorant people as subject of exploitation and a source of cheap manual labor, the fundamental education program has in mind the highest interest of these poor people, to raise their living standard and economic status to a level befitting the dignity of human being."<sup>1</sup>

For the world today, a world full of conflicts, of tensions and of misunderstandings, guns or any other warfare devices are not the real answer. There has been enough shooting, enough killing. Human society has suffered very much, and now needs instead of more suffering, some appreciation, some sincerity, and

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<sup>1</sup>Mildred Tsai, Fundamental Education: The Backbone of Unesco, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Smith College (Northampton, 1953), p. 74.

love for one another. That is perhaps the only means toward peace. Education, many people believe, is the road toward that end. And it is thus not surprising that Unesco, a world organization to promote peace, has assigned "highest priority to education,"<sup>2</sup> of which fundamental education is its backbone.

The lack of educational facilities is a common feature in most underdeveloped countries. Except for a comparatively few children in school, the rest of them and many of their parents are left untouched by modern education. This condition not only impedes progress of the whole country, but also brings conflicts and maladjustments, not only in the family between parents and children, but in society as a whole between youth and age. And fundamental education is to be seen as one means to help non-industrialized country develop itself for better living and to keep its society in good balance in its development toward modernization. In a whole, fundamental education program is an attempt to help the people realize what Lucas Ortiz calls the four cardinal points of fundamental education. That is to say, man must protect his health, he must take advantage of local natural resources, he must dignify his home life--materially and spiritually, and he must be given the opportunities to enjoy leisure.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, helping the people eliminate poverty, igno-

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<sup>2</sup>Waldo Gifford Leland, Unesco and the Defense of Peace (Stanford, California, 1947), p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Lucas Ortiz, as quoted in Learn and Live (Paris, 1951), p.15.

rance, disease, and high death rate is the main issue of fundamental education. It is the common objective of all fundamental education projects, whether they are for rural or urban areas. Literacy campaign is quite often the common front of attack of most fundamental education programs, for it is an important tool; but like all tools, it will get rusty if it is not kept in use. And as W.E.Ward said in his speech before the Special Committee on Information from Non-Self Governing Territories, at Lake Success, "if we wish to cure illiteracy, it cannot be cured solely by providing more schools, important as schools are, we must also provide large quantities of suitable material."<sup>4</sup>

The fundamental education program does not end there. Health and economic improvement are the crying needs of most less developed countries. In helping the people eliminate endemic and contagious diseases, measures should be also taken to prevent as much as possible new types of diseases common to more advanced areas. For it is observed that

There are no frontiers to health problems--there is only a succession of horizons. No sooner has effective control of infectious or contagious diseases been gained and mass diseases reduced or cleared away, than other diseases have assumed a new gravity. This phenomena must be carefully watched in areas of rapid industrialization, otherwise diseases of advanced civilization such as silicosis and mental or degenerative disturbances may find a population unable to resist them.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Causes and Cure of Illiteracy," Times Educational Supplement, 1346 (September 15, 1950), 707.

<sup>5</sup>Unesco, Youth and Fundamental Education (Paris, 1954), p. 13.

Besides, in attempting to improve the standard of living of the people in urban or rural area, the best elements of their culture should be developed. And when needed, the introduction of new elements should be in good harmony with the way of living and thinking of the people. The program should be within their reach. However, it should not disregard the fact that there are cases where the latest scientific inventions can contribute to the rapid economic development of the underdeveloped countries. On the other hand, since women's education has been neglected in many of those countries, superstitions and illiteracy among women are much worse than among men. Thus, programs of fundamental education should not overlook the place of education of women, a necessity for the general raising of the level of living of the people.

Those principles in fundamental education are common to both programs for rural and urban areas. However, the curriculum of the fundamental education for each community will depend upon the urgent and felt needs of the people. And the originating steps of each program will therefore be different. For urban area, it will involve, for instance, literacy campaign, health education, training in occupational skills, in proper use of leisure time, or some other activities of adult education on an elementary level. And while adult education activities are predominant in urban area, extension service projects are prevalent in that for rural community. The program for rural region will capitalize on those

activities which aim at the development of the community, such as betterment of farming methods and tools, introduction or development of local crafts and industries, improvement of hygiene and sanitation, or the like.

The methods of approach of fundamental education program for rural and urban areas will vary with their educational, social, economic, and political conditions and needs. In urban community, the program may be carried out easily through various available organizations, such as adult study groups, youth and workers associations, and others. For rural area, where manpower and educational facilities are lacked, special devices are needed. Team work, on a mobile or non-mobile basis, has proved to be the most appropriate for rural community.

In launching fundamental education program for rural as well as for urban areas, mass communication is of great importance, especially audio-visual aids. But, the teachers or workers in fundamental education should be aware of the fact that when the people are hungry for something and have access to it, they have the tendency to have a dangerous overdose of that for which they have been longing for. Radio, films, filmstrips, or any other media of communication should be within the ability of the people to read, understand and obtain knowledge. Therefore, the fundamental education must be carefully planned. It is, and must be a slow, painstaking enterprise. "It requires plans that are well thought out, aims that are well established, procedures that have

been well tested. Trial-and-error, or improvisation, should not be confused with careful experimentation,"<sup>6</sup> and should be used only when there is no other means.

Whatever approach the fundamental education program is carried out, through adult education techniques in urban area, or through extension service methods in rural region, the basic principle of helping the people help themselves should be ever present with the fundamental education project. And the high art of helping the people of less developed countries is to help them walk into the modern world with "their heads up and their eyes open"<sup>7</sup> with something to give as well as something to receive. That is where lies the rich diversity of the world, a diversity that needs to be preserved.

To help the people help themselves toward a better life is necessary, not only because of Christian charity, but also because it is badly needed in maintaining world peace and in promoting democracy. There can be no safe democracy when the people are ignorant, poor, and sick. "To place the ballot in the hand of the illiterate persons is like hanging a diamond around the neck of a little child and sending it out into the crowded street."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Ismael Rodriguez Bou, "Pointers on Illiteracy," School and Society, LXXVII (January 1953), 20.

<sup>7</sup>Frank Laubach, Toward A Literate World (New York, 1938), p. 170.

<sup>8</sup>Cora Wilson Stewart, Henry Van Dyke, Moonlight School for the Emancipation of Adult Illiterates (New York, 1923), p. 181.



Besides, the unfortunate poor of the world are not deaf. Today they hear two voices. One is telling them, "You are poor because the rich have kept you poor. Revolt!" The other says, "Knowledge is power. Educated people know how to take wealth from the ground and minerals and water. Learn their secret!"<sup>9</sup> Those people are willing to try either way, and that is where lies the responsibility of fundamental education toward promoting world peace through helping the underprivileged people improve their level of living.

The job is great, but it does not therefore imply that men should not try. Countless people are in desperate need for help. Their conditions cannot be ignored any longer. And however difficult the attempts to help them may be, hope in progress is a major prerequisite of further progress.

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<sup>9</sup>Frank Laubach, "Literacy as A Base for World Peace," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXIII (October 1951), 86.

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 15, 1955  
Date

Ruth Byrnes  
Signature of Adviser